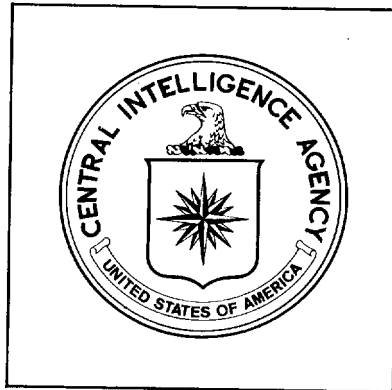


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C O N T E N T S

Bangladesh: Party Structure Established 1

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Bangladesh

Party Structure Established

President Mujibur Rahman last weekend announced the organizational structure of Bangladesh's single party and named its key officials. This action completes the reordering of the political system that Mujib launched last January when he shifted to an authoritarian presidential system. The new party organization further focuses personal responsibility on Mujib for his government's failures and successes.

Mujib has appointed relatives and long-time political associates to leadership posts at every level of the party. The 15-man executive committee, headed by Mujib himself and drawn entirely from leaders of his old Awami League, will be the party's main policy-making body. It will oversee daily party business and is empowered to approve membership in lower-level committees. A 115-member central committee includes senior civil servants, leaders of the armed services and other security groups, and some members of former opposition parties. It will conduct party business between meetings of the party council, a plenary body to be composed of the executive, central and district committees and required to meet only twice every five years. Five special interest fronts--for peasants, labor, women, youth, and students--are each headed by former Awami League stalwarts.

Mujib's party appointments underscore his determination to continue his close personal control over his party and government and to restrict dissent from below. While party membership is theoretically open to any citizen over 18, prospects for the inclusion of significant numbers of former opposition party leaders appear dim.

Although the new appointments do not change the composition of the country's political establishment, most Bengalees appear willing to reserve judgment on

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Mujib's performance as president for a while longer. Disgruntled members of the military and civil service, who pose the greatest potential threat to Mujib's continued rule, are probably pleased that they are represented on the central committee. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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